

Primula capillaris N. & A. Holmgren (1974)**RUBY MOUNTAINS PRIMROSE**

FAMILY: *Primulaceae*, the primrose family.

STATUS:

Heritage Program SENSITIVE LIST, ranks: G1 S1

USFWS/ESA: species of concern. **STATE OF NEVADA:** none. **BLM:** Special Status Species. **USFS:** Humboldt-Toiyabe NF Sensitive Species. **NNNPS:** watch list.

POPULATION CENSUS: **7 occurrences mapped** at 1.0 km (0.6 mi) separation, OR **8 occurrences mapped** at 0.16 km (0.1 mi) separation; total estimated **individuals 14,000+**, total estimated **area 16.8+ ha (41.5+ ac)**. **TREND:** unknown.

IMPACTS AND MAJOR THREATS: Minimal, limited to occasional off-trail recreational use. Grazing has been removed and many sites are in designated wilderness away from trails. Vulnerable to horticultural or hobby collecting, but not successful in cultivation, and difficult to access.

INVENTORY EFFORT: Surveys have been extensive, but a few more populations likely remain to be found in remote high-elevation areas of the Ruby Mountains. Most recent entered survey 1998, average year of last survey 1996.

Years since last entered survey (percent of mapped records at various survey ages): **0-5 yrs:** 50%; **6-10 yrs:** 50%.

LAND MANAGEMENT in decreasing predominance: Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, designated wilderness.

RANGE: Elko County, Nevada. Endemic to the Ruby Mountains. Maximum **range dimension 16.4 km (10.2 mi)** excluding most disjunct record. **Type specimen** collected in Elko County.

ELEVATIONS RECORDED: 8900-10360 feet (2713-3158 meters).

HABITAT: Moist, seasonally saturated, slowly creeping, dark brown loam or sandy loam soils derived from glacial till, generally on steep north to northeast aspects, particularly just below bedrock constrictions in the soil flow that have resulted in extra churning and steepening of the soil and lowered vegetation cover, sometimes on Selaginella mats, in subalpine meadow openings in the subalpine conifer zone, with Selaginella watsonii, Draba oligosperma, Geum rossii, Potentilla fruticosa, Sedum debile, Oxyria digyna, Ribes cf. montigenum, Lithophragma glabra, Luzula comosa, Mertensia ciliata, Pinus albicaulis, etc. Dependent on wetland margin areas.

PHENOLOGY: flowering summer to early-fall. Range of most frequent **survey months:** July-August.

LIFE-FORM AND HABIT: small perennial herb.

DESCRIPTION: A delicate perennial herb with yellow and violet petaled flowers borne on a leafless flower stalk, up to 5 cm tall, arising from a basal rosette of leaves. Flowers in July and August.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Anderson et al. (1991), Holland (1995); Nevada Natural Heritage Program images web page (1998-present) and slide collection (1986-present).

ILLUSTRATIONS: Anderson et al. (1991), Mozingo and Williams (1980).

SPECIFIC REFERENCES:

Atwood, N. D. 1978. Status report for Primula capillaris. Portland, Oregon: U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Driver, T. 1978. Status report for Primula capillaris. Portland, Oregon: U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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Holland, R. F. 1995. Current knowledge and conservation status of Primula capillaris Holmgren and Holmgren (Primulaceae), Ruby Mountain primrose, in Nevada. Carson City: Nevada Natural Heritage Program, status report prepared for the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Reno.

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OF FURTHER INTEREST: Distinct, species in genus with few western North American taxa.
